

# Love

## *is a Many Splendored Thing*

By Captain Kas Jordan, HQ, STARC

Perhaps the toughest job in the military is bridging the diversity gap. In this sense, Sergeant First Class Dorothy Love is a social engineer, teaching California Army National Guard soldiers the various cultures and backgrounds of the diverse ethnic and racial groups comprising the Guard. Many people believe that diversity has been achieved, but they may be missing the point, as Love so elegantly explained during a recent seminar.

"Diversity is more than acknowledging the difference between groups," Love explained. "It's understanding the culture, history, and backgrounds of every culture so that we can operate as one unit. Where soldiers are not seen as black, Asian, white, male, female, or Catholic, but seen as Americans with their individual and unique heritages. Learning to respect this blend, makes us work together much more effectively."

So successful and subtle is Love's approach, that she was caught completely unaware last December when she was presented "The Equal Opportunity Advisor of the Year" award during a ceremony that was part of an army-wide Equal Opportunity conference held in Orlando, Florida. Being so dedicated to the cause, she was planning to bypass the conference in favor of planning another Diversity seminar for California Army National Guardsmen.

"This is the first time such an award has been given," Love recently said in an interview. "It was a total surprise to me to be chosen for this award. As a matter of fact, someone even purchased my Class A uniform and put on the ribbons for me! Then I was really nervous when they called my name and presented me this award in front of more than 1,000 people from all over the world."



PHOTO BY SFC ROBERT PACK

Brigadier General Schook, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Human Resources Director, presented Sergeant First Class Love the prestigious honor. "All the U.S. Army's Major Commands were represented at the conference, so this was really an honor for me," said Love.

Love works as the state diversity initiative coordinator and the Equal Opportunity Junior Representative for the Southwest region of the United States, in addition to being an Equal Opportunity Advisor.

"Although I was signaled out for this award, it is really a broader statement about the California National Guard. It says that the Diversity program is viable, and that our organization and our Adjutant General, Major General Paul D. Monroe, Jr. have made the tools available for solving conflicts, disputes, and complaints, and for advising commanders, as well as the The Adjutant General about resolving key issues that will help build a better Guard."

A common misconception about diversity is that it is about minorities, the injustices that they suffered, and reparations they deserve. "The California National Guard Diversity program is not about minorities at all, it is about treating each other with dignity and respect whether we agree or disagree with certain issues," Love said.

"Through understanding," she explained, "we know why people feel the way they do—it goes both ways—understanding why people on both sides of an issue feel the way they do." She articulately explained that "diversity is not about victimization, but about empowerment—the power to understand, look beyond, and operate as one team." Truly, Sergeant First Class Love is a many splendored thing. 🐾